

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to the Final Office Action dated July 13, 2007. A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is filed herewith. All rejections and objections of the Examiner are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully requests that Examiner Chen contact the undersigned Attorney, David A. Dagg, upon receipt of this amendment, for a telephone interview. Mr. Dagg can be reached at (617) 630-1131.

Support for the amendments to the claims made herein is present at various places in the Specification and Drawings as originally filed. For example, determinations regarding whether a configuration value is the same for all users and/or the same for all locations of the system under development are shown in steps 70 and 72 of Fig. 2, and the category array containing the presently claimed elements regarding whether the configuration value is the same or different for all users and the same or different for all locations of the system under development is shown in Fig. 3. Similarly, Fig. 4 illustrates the decision flow for calculating a specific data store for a configuration value in a software system under development based on whether the configuration value is the same for all users and/or for all location. No new matter has been added.

At paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 1 for indefiniteness under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Amendments to the claims herein are respectfully believed to meet all requirements of the Examiner in this regard.

At paragraphs 11-12 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 1 for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103, citing the combination of U.S. patent 5,960,419 of Fagg, II et al. ("Fagg") and U.S. patent 5,644,686 of Hekmatpour ("Hekmatpour"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As previously noted, Fagg discloses an authoring system for creating an application for a decision management system such as a document assembly system. The Fagg disclosures includes sets of question procedures, answer procedures and advice procedures for a particular application. When later executed, the Fagg procedures generate, respectively, questions, answer choices, and advice for a user of the application. Also created in Fagg are procedures that may be referenced in one or more of the question, answer, or advice procedures for generating content based on an analysis of one or more answers previously provided by a user in response to a question. The content provided by these referenced procedures in Fagg becomes part of the question, answer, or advice provided by the respective procedure making the reference.

The Examiner recognizes that Fagg does not describe or suggest a category array, and/or locating design guidelines that are names of data stores to store an operational characteristic of a system under development in response to the category array, and/or displaying the name of the datastore. The Examiner cites Hekmatpour's teachings for these features of claim 1.

Hekmatpour discloses an expert system employing a three level hierarchical knowledge base. An uppermost level in Hekmatpour is a behavioral knowledge level, a middle level is a structural knowledge level and a lowermost level is an action level. A knowledge editor in Hekmatpour implements guidelines that structure received information in the desired hierarchical three level configuration. At column 12, lines 20-23, Hekmatpour describes a guideline that identifies the source of answers or data for each node in the system, e.g. through a user prompt, extraction from a file, or query to a database. At column 16, lines 12-19, Hekmatpour teaches that the recent replacement of a faulty component with a good part may decrease the system's belief that the part is at fault.

Nothing in the combination of Fagg and Hekmatpour discloses or suggests a method for acquiring and distributing information regarding architectural decisions to developers of a software system under development, comprising:

inputting a plurality of questions, wherein said plurality of questions reflect a system design of said software system under development, and wherein said plurality of questions include questions regarding *whether a configuration value associated with a component of said software system under development is the same for all users of said software system under development*;

generating a category array in response to said plurality of questions, wherein each element in said category array corresponds to a unique set of answers to said plurality of questions, and wherein each element in said category array contains a corresponding one of a plurality of design guidelines, each of said plurality of design guidelines indicating a name of a corresponding one of a plurality of data stores, *wherein a first one of said elements in said category array corresponds to a first unique set of answers indicating that said configuration value is the same for all users of said software system under development, and wherein a second one of said elements of said category array corresponds to a second unique set of answers indicating that said configuration value is not the same for all users of said software system under development*;

inputting an operational characteristic of a component of said software system under development, *wherein said operational characteristic is said configuration value associated with said component of said software system under development*;

displaying said plurality of questions to at least one of said developers of said software system under development;

inputting answers to said plurality of questions from said at least one of said developers of said software system under development;

locating, responsive to said input answers and said category array, one of said plurality of design guidelines related to said operational characteristic, *wherein said located one of said plurality of design guidelines is a name of a data store to be used to store said operational characteristic in said software system under development*; and

displaying said name of said data store to be used to store said operational characteristic said at least one of said developers of said software system under development. (emphasis added)

as in the present claim 1. In contrast, nothing in Fagg and/or Hekmatpour is concerned with locating and displaying a name of a data store to be used to store a configuration value in a system under development. Moreover, the combination of Fagg and/or Hekmatpour does not include a category array with elements corresponding to a unique answer set that indicates that

the configuration value is the same for all users of the system under development, and to a unique answer set that indicates that the configuration value is not the same for all users of the system under development. In contrast, neither Fagg nor Hekmatpour includes any hint or suggestion of even the desirability of determining whether any component of a system under development is or is not used by all users. Further, with regard to newly added dependent claims 21-23, the combination of Fagg and Hekmatpour is similarly silent with regard to any need or advantage to determining whether a component of a system under development is the same for all locations in which the system under development is deployed, or not the same for all locations in which the system under development is deployed.

For these reasons Applicant respectfully urges that the combination of Fagg and Hekmatpour fails to disclose or suggest all the features of the present independent claim 1. The combination of Fagg and Hekmatpour accordingly does not support a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103. As to dependent claims 21-23, they are respectfully believed to be patentable over the combination of Fagg and Hekmatpour for at least the same reasons.

Applicants have amended claim 1, but are not conceding in this application that the unamended claim is not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of allowable subject matter. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully

requested that the Examiner telephone Applicants' Attorney at the number listed below so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

October 15, 2007  
Date

/David Dagg/  
David Dagg, Reg. No. 37,809  
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)  
McGuinness & Manaras LLP  
125 Nagog Park  
Acton, MA 01720  
(617) 630-1131

Docket No. 260-003